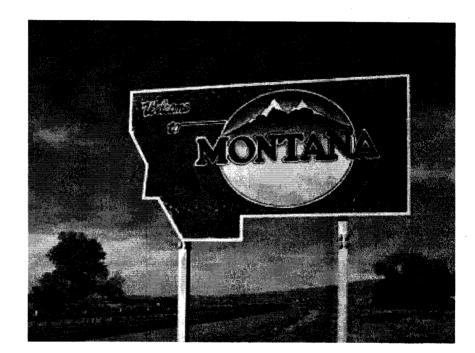# Montana Town Demands Job Applicants' Facebook Passwords

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Bozeman, Montana is a town of 27,500, close to skiing, fly fishing, and home to Montana State University. Its government is also apparently completely daft about how the Internet works.

Bozeman is asking city job applicants to share their private logins and passwords to social networking and other Web sites as part of a background check, according to the AP.

One city commissioner who talked to the AP sounded confused by the policy, and it seems likely it'll be overturned.

But still, a really dumb idea. Both because of the privacy aspect, and because sharing logins and passwords is a very easy way to open yourself to impersonation and identity theft. Especially because the people "smart" enough to share their password with their employer probably have the same password for Facebook and their bank account. And that's not something the city's HR department wants to be liable for, is it?

Here's the U.S. government's tips to keep yourself safe online. No. 5: DON'T SHARE YOUR PASSWORD!

> AP: The issue has spawned hundreds of comments on Web forums and sharp criticism from legislators and the ACLU. ...

> The city argues that it only uses the information to verify application information --

and says it won't hold it against anyone for refusing to provide it. City officials say such checks can be useful, especially when hiring police officers and others in a position of public trust. ...

Bozeman City Attorney Greg Sullivan told the Bozeman Daily Chronicle Thursday that the city may look at changing the policy so that they could view an applicant's social networking sites without asking for login information. One option would be to have an applicant add the city as a "friend" on such sites as Facebook.